



prayer *life!*

Weekly Prayer Focus

November 17, 2019

Wrestling

And Jacob was left alone. And a man wrestled with him until the breaking of the day. When the man saw that he did not prevail against Jacob, he touched his hip socket, and Jacob's hip was put out of joint as he wrestled with him. Then he said, "Let me go, for the day has broken." But Jacob said, "I will not let you go unless you bless me." –Genesis 32:24-36

In the womb [Jacob] took his brother by the heel, and in his manhood he strove with God. He strove with the angel and prevailed; he wept and sought his favor. ... So you, by the help of your God, return, hold fast to love and justice, and wait continually for your God. –Hosea 12:6

"All have sinned," but everyone is different. *All we like sheep have gone astray*, but each sheep goes astray in his own way. Abraham was decisive. When he sinned, he sinned decisively. Isaac was more passive, so—for good and for ill—he acted passively. Jacob was strong and determined. This "lost sheep" had to be subdued to receive God's blessing.

Preparing to meet Esau left Jacob all alone. After sending bribes to his brother and moving his wives and children out of harm's way, Jacob crossed the Jabbok River into the land God had promised to give him. After twenty years, he was back where he belonged, but God still had business to do with him. So as he shivered with fear, alone in the dark, a man came up and attacked him.

Men like Jacob don't just let things happen, so he fought back—all night without giving up. He had no idea who his attacker was, but there was no way he would let him win. Then as dawn began to break, the "man" broke Jacob's strength with a touch that put his hip out of joint. So Jacob just held on tight.

Once again, Jacob realized that God was right there with him, but he still would not give in. Clinging to the Angel of the LORD, he refused to let go until he got a blessing. Finally Jacob was willing simply to receive a blessing from the One who had promised to bless him from the beginning.

As the saying goes, "Be careful what you pray for. You just might get it." Like Jacob, we want God on our side, but we resist honoring Him as God. We desire His blessing but resent His authority. So, before God can conquer for us, He has to conquer us. Fear had driven Jacob to pray. Now he would learn whom he really needed to fear.

This one-paragraph story marks the turning point in Jacob's narrative. It wasn't until he was unable to achieve—or scam for or steal—his blessing that he was able simply to receive it. At that point, God conferred the name "Israel" on Jacob, because he had *striven with God and with man and prevailed* (Genesis 32:28b). Having the LORD as God was God's idea, not Jacob's. Soon his growing—and conflicted—family would become God's chosen people.

The nation Israel got its name from the name God gave Jacob after He broke his strength. Now Jacob would receive his blessing as a part of God's sovereign plan for the world. God was opening a door for the Lamb of God, who would take away the sin of the world.

It's always best when God wins. Our strength to achieve on our own is a measure of our ability to resist His will. There are times, though, when a "Sweet Hour of Prayer" turns into wrestling in prayer. When that happens, thank God. That's when He steps in to your plans, takes over your prayers, and makes them His own, so He can accomplish His purpose through you. And that's how He makes your prayer an instrument of His good and acceptable and perfect will.

To the praise of His glory

From the Elders: Please Pray

Hello Church Family,

Please be in prayer for the Leadership Team and for our church. The Team meets again on Monday, November 18, at 7:00 p.m., for prayer and planning. We have regular meetings each month and ask that you pray for us as we review more responses to NL Moore's recommendations. We are also moving forward with discussions on interim assistance on many levels. We need interim staff to help with worship, administration, and conflict resolution. Please be in prayer that we are unified, gracious, and strive together to see where the Lord is leading.

We also encourage you to join the on-campus prayer meeting that happens every Monday at 6:00 p.m. in the Commons. Just show up.

We seek only His will,
The Leadership Team

Pray for ...

- 1. Our Pastors and Directors:** Tony Chute, Taylor Mendoza, Terilyn Brown, and Marti Wiegman.
- 2. Our Lay Elders:** Tim East, Steve Flood, Mark Kiker, Vinoj Zechariah, and new elders who will soon come onto the board.
- 3. Our Church Staff:** Michelle Balga, Bob Brown, Chelsae Grant, Carolee Jefferson, Amber McEwen, Tamene Menna, Mark Norland, Corie Saunders, and Teri Vaughn.

Please continue to pray for Scott and Kim Williams and Geoff and Chelsae Grant and their families as they have begun life and ministry in new areas away from Northpoint. Please pray for the blessing of clear guidance and provision from God.

Praise Record

Note when and how God answers your prayers. It will help you to see that He really is paying attention.

Date	Request	Date	Answer

When a man's ways please the LORD, he makes even his enemies to be at peace with him. —Proverbs 16:7